



PARTNERS IN FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

<http://www.partnersinflight.org>

October 2004

North American Landbird Conservation Distributed

Nearly all of the 10,000 copies of the PIF Continental Plan have been distributed. But due to the continued demand, we have decided to reprint another 5,000 copies. As before, we will send 1-5 copies to any requester free of charge. But we are requesting donations of \$10 per plan for orders of more than 5 plans. Partial up-front support for the reprinting has been provided by Cornell, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service. We continue to explore options for producing a pdf or other web version for downloading. Many of us believe that the plan should continue to be distributed as a whole, and not as stand-alone tables or other parts.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Popularized Versions of PIF Continental Plan Available

The August 2004 issue of Bird Conservation magazine is almost completely devoted to the PIF Continental Plan, with articles on most of the major plan components. This issue is targeted at those who have some interest in the science of continental-level assessment but who are not interested in all the details. I have 2,000 additional copies available, first-come first-served, for distribution to appropriate audiences.

The October 2004 issue of Birder's World also has a popular article stemming from the Continental Plan. This piece focuses on the 28 species on the PIF Watch List that are in the category of needing "Immediate Action." I have reprints of this article available while supplies last.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Update of PIF Continental Plan

Species assessment for the entire Mexican avifauna will be completed by the end of the year. There is considerable interest in Mexico in having the update of the PIF Continental Plan be an all-bird plan, not just a landbird plan. The Mexican NABCI committee is expected to make a formal proposal on the scope and nature of the plan update after their next meeting. Canada is amenable to an all-bird plan. However, an all-bird plan for North America faces certain difficulties within the U.S. because we still do not have agreement on the process for species assessment. Mexico has used the PIF process for all their birds.

PIF Science Committee Meeting

The PIF Science Committee met on 24-25 September to resolve a number of issues regarding the PIF Species Assessment Database and particularly the regional tier structure. Threats to Breeding and Relative Density scores are being reviewed and updated for all species for all BCRs. Reviews are due by the end of October and scores will be updated in the database as soon as possible thereafter. Assessment scores will no longer be maintained for Physiographic Areas as these polygons are now obsolete from a planning perspective. However, the current set of scores will be maintained as an archive for those who may need to reference this information in the future. The Species Assessment Handbook will be revised to incorporate the many adjustments that have been made.

Committee members continue to refine the correction factors used in the population estimation process. Both the "pair correction" and "distance correction" factors in particular have been analyzed further. White Papers on both topics, along with analyses and some examples, are available from Bob Altman (baltman@abcbirds.org).

Complete notes of this important meeting are available from Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Population Estimation Peer Review Report Completed

The USGS-sponsored peer review of the PIF population estimation process is nearing completion as a final report has been completed. The lead author, Wayne Thogmartin, expects to submit the report for publication in a major ornithological journal. The key architects of the process, Ken Rosenberg and Peter Blancher, are writing a companion piece that will expand and update their Asilomar proceedings paper.

PIF Implementation Committee Meeting

Immediately following the Science Committee, the IC met on 26-27 September to discuss a wide variety of other PIF issues. Minutes will be available and distributed via the listserv in the near future. It has become clear that most of the energy in PIF at the national level is now in the Science Committee and in scientific components of PIF. Communication and education components are particularly suffering from a lack of interest by partners. I continue to seek individuals who are interested in revitalizing our outreach capacity.—Terry Rich

Coordinated Bird Monitoring

PIF continues to move ahead to identify ways to meet the needs of landbirds that are not adequately monitored. As a reminder and as detailed in the PIF

Continental Plan, 243 of the 448 landbird species (54%) have data inadequate to properly determine their long-term, continental population trends. Although progress on CBM as a whole has slowed somewhat due to the recent IAFWA review (see next), there is much work that can be accomplished now to better lay the ground work for much more efficient monitoring in the near future.

Review of Coordinated Bird Monitoring

Rarely in the bird world has a report been so carefully guarded and so eagerly awaited as ***Monitoring Avian Conservation: Rationale, Design, and Coordination*** (September 2004) prepared by the Coordinated Bird Monitoring Working Group of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). This review and report was requested by the directors of the USFWS and USGS, in consultation with IAFWA, at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Spokane in March 2004.

The general objective was to assess opportunities and challenges in coordinated bird monitoring. Specific charges were to 1) identify key technical issues, approaches, and suggestions about the coordination of bird monitoring, 2) suggest a process for integrating and updating ideas from the avian conservation and research community; and 3) produce a report for the IAFWA Science and Research Committee with recommendations on technical aspects of coordinated bird monitoring.

The working group report consists of three sections – Rationale, Design, and Coordination – which emphasize the need to focus monitoring efforts on evaluation of avian responses to conservation actions. The report recommendations are intended to serve as a springboard for the bird conservation community to develop a shared technical and administrative framework for coordinating bird monitoring.

This report was presented during at least 5 committee meetings during the IAFWA annual conference. The biggest area of concern for many of us was that the value of long-term trend monitoring was downplayed. This is especially ironic for PIF because our initiative was created precisely because long-term population trends, as revealed by the BBS, for many neotropical migrants were downward. Indeed, not only PIF but other bird initiatives use long-term trend as the #1 flag for concern. And right now, we have 243 species for which our level of concern may be inappropriate. In addition, urgency in moving ahead with CBM was clearly voiced by states who must complete their Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies, along with a monitoring component, by October 2005.

The PIF Council discussed this report and prepared a letter under the signature of chair, Bruce McCloskey, to the chair of the US NABCI Committee, who will be assembling responses to the report. Anyone interested in seeing these PIF

comments should contact me. The report itself also is available from me. It will be circulated more formally for comments in the near future. To be clear, the report itself is final and will not be changed. However, the next steps remain to be determined.—Terry Rich

Strategic Planning for PIF, NABCI, and USFWS

At the US NABCI Committee meeting on 21-22 September, one of the action items identified was for NABCI to construct long-term and annual work plans that more formally lay out work objectives. Major sources of information for NABCI will be the strategic plans of the various bird initiatives. It has been 18 months since PIF looked at its strategic plan, and it is time for us to revisit that document. We also have a request from the PIF Council to check our progress. Further, the USFWS Migratory Bird Program held its annual meeting in Duluth on 4-8 October where, once again, the topic of better integrating the bird initiatives into Service operations was discussed at some length. As the Service has just completed its strategic plan, it seems logical to examine the degree of overlap between the PIF strategic plan and the Blueprint for the Future of Migratory Birds.

What this all boils down to is multiple reasons to revisit, update, and repackage our strategic plan. I expect to go through the current version and then send it out for comments within the next few weeks.—Terry Rich

Species Assessment Database Funding Sought

The annual cost for maintaining, updating, and serving the PIF Species Assessment Database is \$60,000, which includes the cost of a full-time Database Coordinator, travel, equipment, web services, and training. Past funding has been collected on an *ad hoc* basis from various partners in the U.S. and Canada. However, this approach is no longer sufficient for securing the future of this increasingly important foundation for bird conservation in North America.

PIF has secured a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$30,000 to be matched by \$30,000 in non-federal funds. The U.S. Forest Service has contributed \$10,000 which, although it cannot be used as a match, does reduce the amount to be raised to \$25,000. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has contributed \$10,000 towards this support and thus we still need to find \$15,000 in non-federal funds.

This funding will cover the costs of important updates and expansions of the database over the next 12 months. In the mean time, permanent funding for database support will be pursued through foundations, agencies, and other partners.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov).

Designing Optimal Landscapes – Five Elements White Paper

At a national-level meeting in Port Aransas, TX, in February 2004, PIF and partners from the other NABCI bird initiatives discussed the process of stepping down PIF continental population objectives to regional and local scales. The discussion also considered rolling up local population estimates and targets to assess the reality and magnitude of landscape changes necessary to meet continental objectives. Participants agreed that the stepping down/rolling up of objectives was the beginning of a dialog evaluating the assumptions of PIF population estimates and targets and the methods of monitoring local management implementation.

This process would inevitably be iterative, shifting the dialog from identification of priority species to quantitative estimates of how much habitat was needed, where, and by when. To facilitate the translation of continental population objectives into regional and local targets, and especially to translate population objectives into biologically sound and measurable habitat objectives, the group recommended a process now known as the "Port Aransas Five Elements." A White Paper on this topic is now available for review. Comments are due 25 October.—Randy Dettmers (randy_dettmers@fws.gov)

All-Bird Workshops Schedule

If you haven't yet attended an all-bird workshop in your state or a state near you, check out these upcoming opportunities and participate!

October 26-27 Rio Rancho, NM
November 15-16 Sacramento, CA
November 17-18 Loudonville, OH
November 17-18 Milesburg, PA
December 7-8, Bismarck, ND
December 7-9, BCR 30 - NJ
December first week - Puerto Rico

Deborah Hahn (dhahn@iafwa.org)

Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference Update

The Interim Steering Committee (ISC) created at the Chile conference met for the first time on August 10-13, 2004, to follow-up on charges tasked to it in Chile. The meeting took place in Sarapiquí, Costa Rica, and was hosted by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Ministry of the Environment and Energy of Costa Rica and the Secretariat to the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Marine Turtles. WWF-Central America office made all logistical arrangements, with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. All 12 members of the ISC participated in the meeting.

The main outcome of the meeting was a draft document describing the vision, mission, guiding principles, objectives, Steering Committee structure, membership, and other elements of the initiative. Based upon guidance from the Chile conference, the initiative will include all migratory species, covering taxa as diverse as birds, marine turtles, marine and terrestrial mammals, fishes and invertebrates. A name for the initiative that better reflects the broad nature of the mission and goals has not yet been decided upon. Suggestions are welcome.

The Western Hemisphere Migratory Species draft document addresses how the effort seeks to contribute towards the conservation of the Western Hemisphere's migratory species by strengthening cooperation among nations, international agreements and civil society, and by expanding constituencies and political support. All entities that support the vision, mission and objectives of this initiative would be invited to be partners in its implementation.

Before the end of 2004, the draft document will be presented to the environment ministers of nations in the Hemisphere for their consideration. Subsequently, the document will be circulated to all Chile conference participants and other interested entities with a call for support of this initiative.—Herb Raffaele (herb_raffaele@fws.gov)

2005 RFP - Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act

The Act establishes a matching grants program to fund projects that promote the conservation of these birds in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Projects may include activities to benefit bird populations and their habitats, research and monitoring, law enforcement, and outreach and education. All grant requests must be matched by partner funds at least 3:1. Partner funds from a U.S. federal source may be involved in the project, but are not eligible as match.

Congress appropriated \$4 million for the grants program in Fiscal Year 2004. The FY 2005 appropriation has not yet been determined but House Appropriations for NMBCA is marked up at \$4.4 million, while the Senate side came in at \$4.0 million. Please refer to our Web site, <http://birdhabitat.fws.gov>, and click on Neotropical Birds Grants Program for additional information and application materials. **Proposals must be sent electronically to us by 3 December 2004.**—Doug Ryan (douglas_ryan@fws.gov)

2004 Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Progress Report

Grantees are beginning to post our projects on their websites and show results. I have provided links for some of these below. The Rainforest Alliance is now featuring a number of our LAC projects in their Eco-Index (see <http://www.eco-index.org/new/index.cfm>), along with detailed information.

The West Indian Whistling Duck and Wetlands Conservation –
<http://whistlingduck.org>

Promotion of Neotropical Migratory Waterbird Conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean: Waterfowl Surveys as a Tool for Wetland Conservation in 11 Countries – http://www.ducks.org/conservation/latinamerica_surveys.asp

Conservation in Palo Verde Marsh: Management of a Montreux Record Ramsar Site – <http://www.ots.duke.edu/en/paloverde/news.shtml>

Establishment and Restoration of Community Managed Protected Areas, Local Education, Community Development and Monitoring of Neotropical Migratory Birds in the Sierra Madre Occidental Corridor, Chihuahua –
<http://www.sierramadrealliance.org/conservation/watershed.shtml>

Veracruz River of Raptors – <http://www.pronaturaveracruz.org/vrr.php>

Building the Basis for Conserving Important Bird Areas, Tropical Andes –
http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/andes_ibas/migrants.html

—Doug Ryan (douglas_ryan@fws.gov)

Funding for Wetlands Projects, Additions to National Wildlife Refuges

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission approved funding for 22 U.S. projects recommended by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. Partnerships in 13 states received a total of \$20.5 million in grants to protect, restore, and enhance more than 1.1 million acres of wetlands and associated upland habitats. Partners are more than matching their grant requests with a total of \$53.9 million and will add up to \$96.2 million more in nonmatching funds. The Commission also approved a total of \$6.4 million in funding for 13 projects in 11 Canadian provinces. Project partners will contribute a total of \$15.4 million, including \$6.4 million in matching funds, to affect nearly 98,000 acres.

You will find Project Flash links, containing descriptions of projects found in each state, and a Standard Grants Summary Table, providing summary information for the approved projects, arrayed by state, at the following Web site:

<http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/projects/USprojects/standardgrants090804/USstandardgrantsprojects.html>. The Act continues to be a successful, voluntary, nonregulatory, cost-effective mechanism to help meet continental conservation needs. On behalf of Council Chairman Duane Shroufe, thank you for your support of the Act and the work you do for migratory birds.—David A. Smith (david_smith@fws.gov)

North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants

Small Grants proposals may be submitted at any time, but must be dated no later than the posted deadline. Regardless of date of submission, all applications received before the deadline will be reviewed at the same time. Applications review and funding decisions usually occur within four months. Final funding decision is made following the March meeting of the Migratory Birds Conservation Commission each year. Expected Number of Awards: 40; Estimated Total Program Funding: \$2,000,000.00; Award Ceiling: \$50,000.00. **Due Date for Applications is 3 December 2004.** For details, see <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/DOI/FWS/FA/NAWCASM-05/listing.html>

eBird Mexico (aVerAves) Hits the Streets

La Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO), a través de la Coordinación Nacional de la Iniciativa para la Conservación de las Aves de América del Norte (NABCI-México), tienen el agrado de anunciarles que la herramienta para monitoreo de aves por internet ebird, en su versión en español aVerAves, ya está disponible y en línea, en la siguiente dirección de Internet: http://www.conabio.gob.mx/conocimiento/monitoreo_especies/doctos/averaves.html

ebird es un proyecto desarrollado por el Laboratorio de Ornitología de Cornell y la Sociedad Nacional Audubon de Estados Unidos. aVerAves es la versión en español de este programa que incluye a toda la República Mexicana. Fue desarrollado de manera conjunta por CONABIO en colaboración con estas dos instituciones.

aVerAves es una herramienta sencilla para que puedan llevar un seguimiento de las aves que observen en cualquier lugar de México o el resto de América del Norte (Canadá y Estados Unidos). Podrán almacenar y recuperar en cualquier momento la información de todas sus observaciones de aves, sean de su jardín, su colonia o sus localidades favoritas de observación o de investigación. También podrán tener acceso a toda la base de datos históricos para saber qué es lo que otros observadores de aves están reportando desde diferentes lugares de México o de América del Norte. La base de datos acumulativa de aVerAves es utilizada por aficionados, científicos, manejadores y conservacionistas que quieren saber más sobre la distribución y patrones de movimiento de las aves a través del país y de América del Norte.

Convocamos a la comunidad de ornitólogos y observadores de aves de México a utilizar esta nueva herramienta y a promoverla para ayudarnos a darla a conocer lo más ampliamente posible, para que juntos, contribuyamos a su desarrollo en beneficio del conocimiento y conservación de las aves de México y de América del Norte.—Humberto Berlanga (hberlang@xolo.conabio.gob.mx)

PIF Contact List and Bird Conservation Directory Being Updated

We have been working to update the PIF Contact Lists and the Bird Conservation Directory, hosted by the American Bird Conservancy, both found on our web site. Watch for an announcement that they are ready for use and further review. We know this is a valuable resource for users but it does take considerable effort to keep such lists up to date. Thanks to Janet Ruth for extra effort on this.—Terry Rich

Wind Energy Proceedings Available

The proceedings from the co-sponsored American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) Wind Energy and Birds/Bats Workshop are complete. The proceedings and presentations will be posted to the NWCC website, www.nationalwind.org, the ABC website, www.abcbirds.org and the AWEA website, www.awea.org. The workshop was convened to examine current research on the impacts of wind energy development on avian and bat species and to discuss the most effective ways to mitigate such impacts. Also, the proceedings will be sent to all workshop attendees on CD.—Rachel Permut (rpermut@resolv.org)

Ohio Launches New Initiative

A consortium of conservation partners, lead by Audubon Ohio, Black Swamp Bird Observatory, Ohio State University's School of Natural Resources, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, has teamed together to launch a statewide, all-bird conservation initiative in the Buckeye State. This effort is part of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative and is modeled after the first successful statewide plan developed in Wisconsin.

A visit to the OBCI website (www.obcinet.org) will show the 21 organizations that currently make up the Coordinating Council of OBCI. An additional 28 organizations to date have agreed to become partners. This diverse group includes local park districts, zoos, nature clubs, academic institutions, land trusts, as well as state and national conservation organizations and governmental agencies.—Paul Rodewald (rodewald.2@osu.edu)

California Coastal Scrub and Chaparral Bird Conservation Plans

Hardcopies are now available for California's Coastal Scrub and Chaparral Bird Conservation Plan. This printing was made possible by the Temper of the Times Foundation, Inc. The Bureau of Reclamation has agreed to fund the publication of Version 2.0 of the Riparian Bird Conservation Plan. Copies will be available soon. Version 2.0 can be viewed at the CalPIF web site: www.prbo.org/calpif.-- Kim Kreitinger kkreitinger@PRBO.ORG

Land Manager's Guide to Birds of the South

There are plenty of copies available of Paul Hamel's "Land Manager's Guide to Birds of the South" published by The Nature Conservancy. The price is \$30.00, which includes shipping. Contact Laura Mason (lmason@tnc.org).

Golden Eagle Rangewide Survey Results

The final report from WEST, Inc. with the survey results for the Golden Eagle Rangewide Survey conducted in 2003 can now be downloaded from our web site: http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/birds/golden_eagle/Final_Golden_Eagle_Report_8_30_04.pdf.—Stephanie L. Jones (Stephanie_Jones@fws.gov)

Revised List Of High Priority North American Shorebird Populations

The list of high priority North American shorebird populations as identified in the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan has been revised. The re-evaluation was conducted by many of the same biologists who were involved with the original conservation assessment. We hope this will aid your planning and implementation of shorebird conservation actions. Shorebird biologists evaluated the differences in conservation status among the 74 shorebird populations previously identified and, where appropriate, combined taxa within a species that shared the same conservation status. Population designations are provided in the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan and the Plan's Conservation Assessment report (available at <http://shorebirdplan.fws.gov/USShorebird/PlanDocuments.htm>). In general, only a few, minor adjustments were made to the original assessment.—Brad Andres (brad_andres@fws.gov)

Ri  Pl tano Biosphere Reserve

The Ri  Pl tano Biosphere Reserve is an international Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site. More than 2 million acres in size, it is the largest protected area in Honduras and part of the largest contiguous rainforest in Central America. The Reserve also is home to 5 peoples: The indigenous Miskito, Pech and Tawahka-Sumu, and the ethnic Gar funa and Ladino. Numbering about 20,000 persons, these peoples traditionally have subsisted by farming, fishing and hunting. Tragically, their culture and environment are threatened by outsiders. Timber, agriculture and cattle operators have deforested more than 10 percent of the Reserve. Gold mining is contaminating its rivers. Armed settlers are evicting villagers from their traditional lands. To learn more about our activities, accomplishments and details about this region of Honduras, or to make an online donation, please visit our web site: www.education-for-conservation.org/home.--Eric Greenquist (eric_greenquist@or.blm.gov)

La Tangara No. 52

No 52 is now available at: <http://www.latangara.org/archive.htm>. In this edition:

- * Note from Diego Calderon
- * Partners in Flight Mesoamerica symposium during Mesoamerican congress in Nicaragua
- * 40 Neotropical Projects Approved Under The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act
- * Conservationists Find Bird Thought Extinct
- * National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grants Funds For Important Projects By WHSRN
- * Bird Conservation and Sustainable Development Project in Querétaro, Mexico—José M Zolottoff-Pallais

Breeding Bird Survey Involvement Needed

The BBS is the largest and longest running multi-species monitoring program for terrestrial species in North America. The value of BBS data is demonstrated by the continual outpouring of planning documents and peer-reviewed publications that use, not only BBS trend information, but also its relative abundance data. Despite the critical importance of this monitoring program, every year many BBS routes are not run. We have learned that even within resource agencies, certain offices may not support the participation of their capable, professional staff. As a result, Partners in Flight, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, and the American Bird Conservancy are developing an outreach strategy with the goal of seeing that all BBS routes are run every year. If you are a good birder (or supervise a good birder) who is not doing at least one BBS route every year, we need you!—Terry Rich

Interactive Guide to Boreal Birds

The Boreal Songbird Initiative (BSI), in partnership with the Ducks Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation, has produced an interactive, on-line field guide to Boreal birds, providing a new tool to the millions of U.S. bird enthusiasts who track birds at their backyard birdfeeders and in their local communities. The guide is posted on BSI's website http://www.borealbirds.org/boreal_species_sub-home.html. It can also be viewed on the National Wildlife Federation's eNature site which more than 600,000 people visit each month.—Marilyn Heiman (marilynheiman@comcast.net)

Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas

The Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas is now available. Based on field work conducted from 1986 through 1991, the atlas includes information on the distribution, abundance, recent population trends, habitats, life history, and historical status of 216 breeding species. The atlas costs \$25.95 (including shipping and handling) and may be ordered from Ruth Johnson (rjohnson@inhs.uiuc.edu)

Nevada Birding Map

The Lahontan Audubon Society, based in Reno, has published the Nevada Birding Map, the first map of its kind for this state. This publication is the culmination of a project begun in November 2002 during which coordinator Ron Conkey logged over 11,000 miles of research, birding, and documentation resulting in an extensive amount of comprehensive information formatted into an attractive, accessible aide for anyone interested in birding Nevada.

With the Nevada Birding Map, a field identification guide, and a good road map, casual birders will find productive Nevada birding opportunities opening up to them. The map also offers the experienced birder a selection of very stimulating locations. Folded in road-map style for the birding traveler's ease, the map opens to 24 x 36 inches. In full color, it is printed on 80-pound dull-coated glossy paper for durability and strong color definition. Six color photos also enhance its visual appeal.

To order Nevada Birding Map send \$4 per map cash or check payable to Lahontan Audubon Society to Ron and Carol Conkey, 1865 Eastlake Boulevard, Carson City, NV 89704. For further information see Nevadabirdmap@aol.com.

NC Partners in Flight PowerPoint

There is a new, updated version of a NC Partners in Flight PowerPoint now available on the web site <http://www.faculty.ncwc.edu/mbrooks/pif/>.--Mark E. Johns (johnsme@mindspring.com)

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Reminder – I am making a concerted effort to ensure that we have all the pertinent PIF meetings listed here and on the PIF web site. Be sure to send me your meeting announcements 3-6 months or longer ahead of time.

Southeastern PIF Steering Committee

The Southeastern PIF Steering Committee will meet during the annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on 30 October - 3 November 2004, at Hilton Head, SC. For more information contact SE PIF Co-chairs Catherine Rideout (cwideout@agfc.state.ar.us) or Laurel Moore Barnhill (lamore@fs.fed.us).

National Grassland Bird Conference

A National Grassland Bird Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn in Socorro, New Mexico on 2-4 November 2004. The conference will focus on the needs of grassland birds on U. S. Forest Service National Grasslands, wintering grassland birds, and the Forest Service's international partnership with Mexico, Canada, and TNC. For details, contact John G. Sidle (jsidle@fs.fed.us).

Inaugural Meeting of the Bird Conservation Alliance

Plan to attend the inaugural meeting of the Bird Conservation Alliance (BCA), to be held at The Nature Conservancy Worldwide Office, 4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100 Arlington, VA, on 10 November 2004 from 09:00-17:30. The Alliance has evolved from the American Bird Conservancy Policy Council, and is a network of organizations that focus on bird conservation, study, education, observation and advocacy representing millions of birdwatchers and concerned citizens united for the conservation of birds.

The theme of the meeting is 'The Future of Birds and Bird Conservation'. This initial meeting will enable members to discuss current bird conservation issues, hear from a range of speakers on the status and future of birds and bird conservation, and begin setting out a plan for how the alliance can work most effectively to enhance bird conservation.

There is no registration charge for the meeting, however, lunch is \$10. Space is limited, so please **RSVP** by e-mail at your earliest convenience.—Alicia Craig (acraig@abcbirds.org)

Third Yucatan Bird Festival

The call is out for the Third Annual Yucatan Bird Festival, to be held in Mérida, Yucatán, México, on 13-21 November 2004. Whether you are attracted by our more than 400 colorful bird species, or by the stone sculptures of bird figures left behind by the ancient Maya, there is something for everyone. Steve N. G. Howell and Merle Greene Robertson lead the roster of special guests for a week full of fascinating field trips, unique exhibits, conferences, workshops and social get-togethers.

Whether you are a beginner or advanced birdwatcher, bird photographer or student of the Maya culture, we will do our best to provide you with new experiences and knowledge. Our local guides from the reserve communities will teach you Maya bird names in exchange for your friendship during the two-day xoc ch'ich' (bird count in Maya). Your participation directly benefits our bird conservation efforts in the region.

Check the following websites for information <http://www.ecoyuc.com/toh.html> and www.yucatanbirds.org.mx For reservations, contact: toh@ecoyuc.com.—
Barbara MacKinnon de Montes (mackinnon@prodigy.net.mx)

California All-Bird Workshop

The California All-Bird Conservation Workshop will be held on 15-16 November 2004 at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Sacramento. All-Bird Conservation Workshops, aimed at state wildlife biologists, land managers, and their bird conservation partners throughout the United States, provide an orientation to each of the bird initiatives and the various conservation plans. The workshops also identify priority species, population objectives, and habitat objectives within the state. A major goal is to provide state resource managers and their partners with information on the major findings and recommendations found in newly completed national and regional bird conservation plans.

Registration fees for non-state employees are \$50.00. Registration forms and accommodation information can be found at the California Partners in Flight web site at: www.prbo.org/calpif. A draft agenda will also be available on the web site. If you have any questions, please contact either Kim Kreitinger (kkreitinger@prbo.org) or Sam Blankenship (sblanken@dfg.ca.gov).

PIF Mesoamerican Meeting

The VIII Congreso de la Sociedad Mesoamericana para la Biología y la Conservación will be held at the Centro de Convenciones Crowne Plaza, in Managua, Nicaragua, on 15-19 November 2004. The second circular for the meeting is available and it contains all the information you need to participate. We will have a PIF Mesoamerican symposium and discussion sessions to revisit bird conservation needs in the region and the role of PIF in meeting those needs. The circular is available from me.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Southeast PIF

The annual Southeast Partners in Flight meeting will be held 16-18 February 2005 in McAllen, Texas. This meeting will be a terrific opportunity to meet and discuss bird conservation with our colleagues from Mexico. We will be taking full advantage of the location, and attendees will be able to attend the full meeting and enjoy morning and post-meeting field trips. For current details, please see the meeting webpage at (www.agfc.com/sepif). The webpage will be updated as planning progresses, so check back regularly for details on registration, agenda, and field trips.—Catherine Rideout (cwideout@AGFC.STATE.AR.US)

Shorebird Summit

We are planning to hold a shorebird summit in Galveston, Texas, 22-25 February

2005. The general plan is to evaluate where we are with the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, through presentations, and to hold working sessions to outline future strategies. All-day field trips will be planned for Friday, 25 February and plan to fly in on 21 February. The meeting site, the Hotel Galvez, is an historic building located about 50 miles from the Houston International Airport.—Brad Andres (brad_andres@fws.gov)

Next National Partners in Flight Meetings

The next national PIF Implementation Committee (IC) meeting will be held on 14-15 March 2005. This is immediately prior to the 70th annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference which will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA (<http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org>). The exact location for the IC meeting is TBD.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

The next newsletter will be issued on 1 January 2005. Items are due 15 December 2004 to Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov) by e-mail only. Please put "Newsletter Item" in the subject line.